

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 11, 13 and 15-31 are pending. Claims 1, 4-7, 11 and 13 are amended, claims 15-31 added and claims 2, 3, 9, 12 and 14 canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter found therein.

In paragraph 2, on page 2 of the Office Action, the title was objected to. The title has been amended herein. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

In paragraph 4, on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Specific language in claims 5 and 7 was identified as forming the basis for the rejection. The claims have been amended responsive to the rejection.

With respect to claim 5, the claim as originally presented was correct. Claim 5 is directed to the embodiment found in Fig. 7 and depended from claim 3. Thus the third converging unit had a dual functionality in the case of the second embodiment of Fig. 7. That is, it converges the laser beam onto the first deflector and converges the laser beam that has been converged by the first converging unit onto the scan start time determination unit. Therefore, it acts as both the third converging unit and fourth converging unit as found in the first embodiment. Although Applicants have amended claim 5 to convey this dual functionality, it is submitted the claim as originally presented was accurate and fully met the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. For that reason, the amendment to claim 5 is not necessary to patentability.

In paragraph 6, on page 3 of the Office Action claims 1, 2, 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Houki, U.S. Patent No. 4,847,492 and on page 8, claims 3, 4, 6, 10, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Houki in view of Kaneko, U.S. Patent No. 4,720,632. The rejections have

been rendered moot by the amendment of claim 1 to include the features of claims 2, 3 and 9, claim 9 having been indicated as allowable and the further amendments of claims 11 and 13 to include such features.

Applicant appreciates the indication that claim 9 is allowable and that claims 7 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. As noted above, claim 7 has been amended to overcome the rejection and thus claims 7 and 8 are allowable. Further, the features of claim 9 have been incorporated into claim 1 and thus claim 1 is allowable. Because claims 1, 11 and 13 include the allowable features claims depending therefrom are also allowable for that reason and the additional features recited therein.

Further, added claims 15-31 are allowable. Claim 15 is a combination of claims 1, 2, 5 and 7 and thus, is allowable as indicated above. Further, claims 16, 17, 18 and 19, which depend therefrom, are also allowable. Claim 20, which corresponds to claims 11, 12 and comparable features from claims 6 and 7 is allowable as is claim 21, which comprises claims 13, 14 as well as comparable features from claims 6 and 7. Claim 22 is a combination of claims 1-4. Claims 23-28 correspond to original claims 5-10 but depend from claim 22. These claims are allowable as claim 5 was only rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claim 29 is a combination of claims 11 and 12 and includes features similar to those found in original claims 2 and 4. The laser beam scanner, as defined by claims 22 and 29, has a third converging unit and a fourth converging unit formed of the same component. Houki does not disclose such a third converging unit. Further, the cylinder lens 34 of Kaneko, alleged to be a third converging unit, is a unique shape for fitting into the holder 32 as shown in Figs. 2 and 3 of Kaneko. Although there is no discussion about the cylinder lens 12, which can be understood as alleged to be the fourth converging unit, there is no reason for the

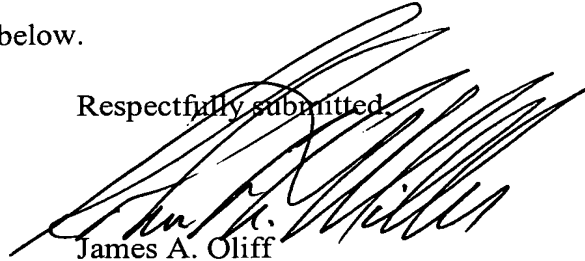
cylinder lens 12 to have such a unique shape because a cylinder lens 12 does not fit in to any holder through which light passes to a photoelectric element. Therefore, it cannot be alleged that the cylinder lens 34 and the cylinder lens 12 are formed of the same component.

Claim 30 is a combination of claims 1-3 and 5 and claim 31 is a combination of claims 11 and 12 with features similar to original claims 2 and 5. The laser beam scanner defined by 30 and 31 has a third converging unit, acting as a fourth converging unit, converging the laser beam emitted by the laser diode onto the first deflector and, as the third converging unit converging the laser beam that has been converged by the first converging unit onto the scan start time determination unit. Neither Houki nor Kaneko disclose such a scanner. Further, the only rejection of the subject matter of claim 5 was under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, which has been addressed in the added claims. Thus, claims 30 and 31 are also allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 4-8, 10, 11, 13, and 15-21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 29, 2004

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